SAINT MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fourth Sunday
OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 23, 2018
Mary set out and traveled to the hill country
in haste to a town of Judah,
where she entered the house of
Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.
Luke 1:39–40
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St. Mary Catholic Church
19515 S. 115th Avenue P.O. Box 2 Mokena, IL 60448
(708) 326-9300 stmarymokena.org

Mass Schedule : The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is Offered:

Daily Mass
8:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, June - Aug.
7:30 a.m. on Wednesdays @ Start of School Year - May*
8:30 a.m. School Mass @ Start of School Year– May*
Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 p.m.
Sunday Masses 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00a.m., 6:00 p.m.

First Friday Sacred Heart of Jesus Devotion Mass 7:00 p.m.
First Saturday Immaculate Heart of Mary Devotion Mass 8:00 a.m. St. Peregrine Devotion 4th Wed. 6:15 p.m.

Devotions

Daily Rosary
7:30 a.m.
8:00 a.m. Wednesdays @ Start of School Year - May
7:00 p.m. Wednesday Evenings
Daily Divine Mercy Chaplet 8:30 a.m.
8:00 a.m. on Wednesdays Sept. - May
Adoration—Wednesdays immediately after morning Mass in the chapel until Benediction at 6:45 p.m. in the chapel.

Children's Liturgy of the Word Sunday, during the 9:30a.m. Mass. All children ages 5 thru 8 are invited to hear the Good News explained.

Reconciliation/Confessions

First Fridays 6:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

First Saturdays 8:30 a.m.—9:30 a.m.
Saturdays 3:30 p.m.—4:30 p.m.

**In the event of our school closing for inclement weather on a Wednesday during the winter months, Daily Mass will remain at 7:30 a.m. and the School Mass at 8:30 a.m. will be cancelled.*

Parish Office Door #3 Office Hours: Monday Through Friday 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Parish Directory

Pastor Fr. Dindo Billote	708-326-9307	
Parochial Vicar Fr. Raed Bader	708-326-9360	
Deacons		
Deacon Gary Bednar	708-326-9300	DeaconGary@StMaryMokena.org
Deacon Nabil Halaby	708-326-9302	DeaconNabil@StMaryMokena.org
Deacon Bob Kaminski	708-326-9300	DeaconBob@StMaryMokena.org
Deacon John Rex	708-326-9300	DeaconJohn@StMarymokena.org
Parish Office	708-326-9300	Parish Fax Number 708-326-9301
Donna Hungerford, Parish Secretary	708-326-9305	Secretary@StMaryMokena.org
Business Manager, Thomas Dudik	708-326-9309	
Maintenance, Dave Bridges	708-326-9373	
Director of Faith Formation, Melissa Novak	708-326-9313	Mnovak@StMaryMokena.org
Coordinator of Faith Formation, Danielle Kuboushek	708-326-9353	Dkuboushek@StMaryMokena.org
Christian Service Director, Bernice Halaby	708-326-9323	bhalaby@StMaryMokena.org
Liturgy Director, Deacon Nabil Halaby	708-326-9302	Liturgy@StMaryMokena.org
Director of Sacred Music Anna Pacek	815-690-3854	Apacek@StMaryMokena.org
Associate Director of Sacred Music Simonetta Pacek	815-690-7899	Spacek@StMaryMokena.org
Director of Religious Education (grades K-6) Nicole Brochmann	708-326-9355	DRE@stmarymokena.org
Director of Religious Education (grades 7 & 8) Director of Youth Ministry Craig Mazur	708-326-9356	Teens@StMaryMokena.org
School Office	708-326-9330	
Debbie Dexter, Secretary	708-326-9341	SchoolSecretary@StMaryMokena.org
School Principal, Beth Cunningham	708-326-9344	Principal@StMaryMokena.org
Assistant School Principal, Jeanne Wolski	708-326-9339	AssistantPrincipal@StMaryMokena.org

RCIA—anyone interested in becoming Catholic should contact the parish office (708) 326-9313.
Baptisms—are usually scheduled the first and third Sunday of the month at 12:15 p.m. following 11:00 a.m. Mass. Contact the Parish Office to make arrangements for the baptismal preparation class.
Marriages—need to be scheduled at least 6 months in advance upon approval of a priest. Remember to secure the church date before the reception hall. Stop in the Parish office to begin this process.
Registration—New to St. Mary? Please stop in the Parish office to complete our registration form or visit our website.
Anointing of the Sick—Contact the Parish office (708) 326-9305.

The collection for Sunday,
December 16
will be published at a later date.
Thank you for your generosity.

If you would like to place flowers next to our Blessed Mother, Mary,
Please call Donna Hungerford
(708) 326-9305.

Prayers for the Sick

Rich Ciancio, Louise Brown, Richard Junge, Frank Olen, Mary Ackley, Adam Cymerman, Janice Dobek, Roger Brown, Kelly Foster, George Stevenson, Vincent Felice, Frank Librera, Salvatore Spalla, Joan Werges, Virginia Owen, Leo Szpak, Maria Abbeduto, Katherine Shanahan, Janet Colby, Richard Johnson, Alfred Dreifke, Marge Migler, Chet Lockwood,, Deacon Bob Kaminski, Jamie Hevran, Stephanie Bednarski, Tammy Scarelli, Barbara Smith, Dottie Grzeskiewicz, Liam, Dave Thompson, Ethan Hatfield, Cyndi Stanfield, Brenda Castile, Georgia Lalezas, Martha Tomal, Alexander Starykowicz, Jerrry Burd, Peter Rogers, Mia Bennett , Sandy Martin

Prayers for the Deceased

Please remember our departed loved ones.
Michele Joeine Zucco, Jean Koziol, Dorothy Komer
Eternal rest grant unto them and let perpetual light shine upon them!

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, December 24
All Masses: For the Parishioners of St. Mary

Tuesday, December 25
All Masses: For the Parishioners of St. Mary

Wednesday, December 26
8:00 a.m. Bill Marciano

Thursday, December 27
8:00 a.m. Jim and Lila White

Friday, December 28
8:00 a.m. Cathy Plunkett

Saturday, December 29
8:00 a.m. The O'Connell & O'Donnell Families
5:00 p.m. Donald Bernhard, Dave & Jenny Norton

Sunday, December 30
8:00 a.m. Patricia & Patrick McAndrew
9:30 a.m. The Parishioners of St. Mary
11:00 a.m. Alison Pomorski
6:00 p.m. Barry Szafranski

This Week at St. Mary

Merry Christmas!

Monday, December 24 Christmas Eve
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
4:00 p.m. Mass (Church)
4:15 p.m. Mass (Gym)
5:30 p.m. Mass (Church)

Tuesday, December 25 Christmas Day
12:00 a.m. Midnight Mass (Church)
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
9:30 a.m. Mass (Church)
11:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
12:30 p.m. Mass (Church)

Wednesday, December 26
Christmas Break Offices Closed
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)

Thursday, December 27
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)

Friday, December 28
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)

Saturday, December 29
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
3:30 p.m. Confessions (Church)
5:00 p.m. Mass (Church)

Sunday, December 30
8:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
9:30 a.m. Mass (Church)
11:00 a.m. Mass (Church)
6:00 p.m. Mass (Church)

A MESSAGE from Fr. Dindo

MEMORIES AND DREAMS

Throughout our lives, we retain the language and habits of our native region and family of origin. Should we return to our home after a long absence, we quickly revert to its familiar speech and practices. Our deep memory is reflected in old stories and words and speech patterns. This familiarity runs like an underground river and accompanies us wherever we go.

Not only do we remember, we are incorporated into and made part of a greater memory. In remembering and recollecting, we are in turn gathered up and re-collected.

Today we remember Mary, a small figure travelling the country roads to visit Elizabeth. All the great pronouncements and dreams of the prophets point to this time when the Lord's words to Mary would be gathered and fulfilled. The memories of her people are alive in her, and memories of her nourish our own living faith.

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Peace and all good things!
Father Dindo

Schedule of Liturgical Ministers for next week December 29 & 30, 2018

Team C	5:00 PM	8:00 AM	9:30 AM	11:00 AM	6:00 PM
Lector	Pam DeGregorio Bob Prskalo	Midge Saunders Dave Stanton	Rosalie Leitelt Andy Leitelt	Bill Hurley Kevin Plankinton	Barry Cullum Dan Alberts
EM	Bob Gombas Paul Wolf Kathy Boucher Pat O'Gorman Andrea Taylor Mary Ann Braasch Sue Murphy	Tom Morrison Annette Morrison Faith Morrison John Morrison (Grace Morrison) (Adam Morrison) David Jellema Sandra Halper Christine Weeks	Kathy Bahnaman Ray Lucci Meg McCabe Rima Murphy Frank Dundek (Michael Cepolski) Mary Jo Cepolski Joseph Cepolski	Gladys Weber Jean Ryan Arlene Krcmaric Ed Krcmaric Amora Valera Sue Lazzari Marcia Frank	Tom McCrea Monica Cha Sarah Noone
Altar Servers	Nick Brunner Cullen Parker Violet Schabel John Stanek	Nathan Ferin Rachel Ferin	Lauren Murphy Anthony Kowalski Donald Kowalski Aidan McInerney Brighid Giblin	Thomas Masloroff Siena Adducci	Meghan Cullum Reagan Sincak

If you are assigned on this schedule and you are unable to serve, it is your responsibility to find a qualified substitute from the approved list. We appreciate your help and thank you for volunteering!

Moving into a new parish, like anything new, is always a little uncertain. If you have been seeking a parish community in which to worship, to learn, to pray, to join in social activity and to be of service to others, our doors and hearts are open. We are thankful that God has sent you to us, and we welcome you to our parish family of faith.
To register in our parish family you may come to the parish office or call the parish office at 708-326-9305 and forms will be sent by mail, or go to our website, click newcomers, and scroll down to registration.

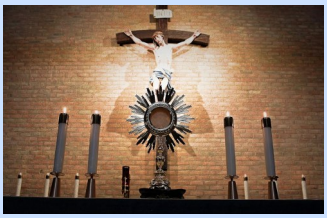
Welcome new parishioners who registered in December:

Angela Jordan
Edward & Michele Melody
Sean & Kelly Williams
Matthew and Kelly Kaplan
Nicholas & Kristen Dalzell
Michael & Tina O'Mara

PRAY THE ROSARY IN CHURCH
DAILY 7:30 A.M.
&
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
7:00 P.M.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
Tuesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
Wednesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
Thursday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Friday: 1 Jn 1:5 -- 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt 2:13-18
Saturday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35
Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Ps 128:1-5 or Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10; Col 3:12-21 [12-17] or 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24; Lk 2:41-52



Eucharistic Adoration

Every Wednesday we have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel immediately after morning Mass to Benediction at 6:45 p.m.

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO WERE BAPTIZED:

THERESE SUZANNE NORTON

MAY GOD BLESS HER.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, December 24th
4:00 p.m. - Church
4:15 p.m. - Gym
5:30 p.m. - Church

Christmas Day, December 25th
Midnight Mass - Church
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.,
12:30 p.m. - Church

Year of Discipleship

Throughout 2019 the parish will celebrate the year of Discipleship. Webster dictionary's definition of "disciple" is someone who adheres to the teachings of another. It is a follower or a learner. It refers to someone who takes up the ways of someone else. Applied to the faith, a disciple is someone who learns from Jesus to live like him. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus commissions his Apostles and all Christians, to "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them….and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

Before we ourselves can be disciples and share the Good News with others, we need to strengthen our relationship with God, and become familiar with the Gospels and teachings of the church. In an effort to help you learn about the beautiful teachings of the church, and feel equipped to have conversations about the faith with others, Fr. Raed and myself will include one minute answers to questions about the faith at Mass. The answers will be supplemented by an article in the bulletin each week. We want to answer *your questions about the faith. If you would like to make a video with friends or family, or simply ask a question, email it to heartsonfire@stmarymokena.org. Your video might be used on social media, and your question could be answered at Mass!*

It is my hope that by learning more about the faith, it will **fan the fire** for God in your heart. It is my hope that in this coming year, you will **strengthen** your relationship with God. It is my hope that your **love** for God will grow so much that you will not be able to keep it to yourself! The Blessed Virgin Mary was the greatest disciple and will be our Patroness for the Year of Discipleship. We ask her to pour out her graces upon us, and lead us closer to her son, Jesus. Mary, Our Lady of Grace, pray for us!

Peace and all good things,

Fr. Nino Billotte

THE VICAR'S CORNER
FR. RAED BADER

Is Baptism Merely a Symbol*?*

By Kenneth Howell

OBJECTOR: I heard the most absurd thing the other day—a Catholic said baptism is necessary for salvation. That certainly can't be true, because the Bible says in Acts 4:12 that Jesus is the only "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
CATHOLIC: Baptism is necessary for salvation because 1 Peter 3:21 also says "baptism . . . now saves you." Jesus as the only Savior uses the waters of baptism to save people from their sins. Further, our Lord once said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16).
OBJECTOR: But that's impossible. Baptism is a symbol of our faith in Christ. It is not the Savior himself. The Catholic doctrine confuses the symbol and the reality.
CATHOLIC: The Catholic doctrine of baptism *unites* the symbol and the reality. It is because of the union of the symbol—water—with the reality—the Holy Spirit—that the apostle Peter can say, "baptism now saves you." It is the same idea as Jesus said in John 3:5, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Being born of the water and the Spirit is an explanation of what he says in verse 3, "Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
OBJECTOR: But surely Jesus is not speaking here of baptism. Either he is speaking metaphorically or he is referring to the "water" that comes out during natural birth. He is saying that a person must be born twice: once naturally and once spiritually.
CATHOLIC: So you would agree that Jesus meant a spiritual birth, or regeneration, when he spoke of "being born of the Spirit"?
OBJECTOR: Yes, when he spoke of "being born again," he used the Greek word *anothen*, which means both *again* and *from above*. He intended to draw on the systematic ambiguity of the word to show that a supernatural birth is involved in being born again.
CATHOLIC: I agree. But tell me: When does a person have this experience of "being born again" or "being born from above"?
OBJECTOR: When he believes in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.
CATHOLIC: Then what is the purpose of baptism in your view?
OBJECTOR: It is an outward symbol of that regeneration of the heart. It has no other function.
CATHOLIC: So when Jesus said that you must be "born of water," what was he referring to? Natural birth? That would be equivalent to him saying that you have to be a human being to enter the kingdom—as opposed to being an animal or something else—which seems unnecessary. It seems more natural to read his words as meaning that you have to be "born of water" in some deeper sense.
OBJECTOR: Like I said, it's possible that he was speaking metaphorically. Perhaps he was referring to the promise in Ezekiel 36:25–26: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you."
CATHOLIC: That is a beautiful verse. It expresses exactly what we Catholics believe takes place in baptism. We sprinkle water on the person and God gives that person a new heart.
OBJECTOR: Notice that Ezekiel 36:25 does not say that *we* will sprinkle clean water on a person. God says "*I* will sprinkle clean water on you." So this cannot be talking about baptism, since baptism is *us* doing the action, not God.
CATHOLIC: You tend to place separations and divisions in biblical texts. We Catholics believe that when we baptize a person, God is baptizing the person through our hands, our agency. Notice that Ezekiel 36:25–26 says that God gives the sprinkled person "a new heart" and "a new spirit." Isn't this the same as what Jesus says when he speaks of being born again of the water and the Spirit? Furthermore, when Ezekiel says that the person will be cleansed from all impurities and idols, isn't this the same kind of cleansing that Ananias told Paul when he said, "Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his [the Lord's] name" (Acts 22:16)?
OBJECTOR: Look, we agree that God cleanses the heart. I just don't believe that baptism effects that cleansing, because water has no power to do something spiritual like forgive sins. To be baptized is an act of obedience to God that portrays the inner cleansing of the heart.

Continued..

CATHOLIC: We don't believe that water has some inherent power to forgive but that Christ's presence in the water is what brings about the forgiveness. It is a symbol, as you say, but it is also more than a symbol. Otherwise, what Ananias said to Paul makes no sense, "be baptized and wash away your sins."
OBJECTOR: I don't believe that the washing away of sin is inherently connected to baptism. Ananias said, "Be baptized and wash away your sins." He didn't say "be baptized and through this wash away your sin." I already said that the waters of baptism are a symbol or sign of the inner spiritual reality.
CATHOLIC: Yes, I know. But there is even more. In the Bible, physical things could represent spiritual realities because they also *contain* those realities. Take the pillars of cloud and fire along with the tent of meeting (tabernacle) in the Old Testament. It was not merely a sign of God's presence among the children of Israel; it embodied God's presence. That is why Exodus tells us that when the pillar of cloud or fire descended on the tent of meeting, the people bowed down and worshiped. These symbols carried the realities they indicated.
It is this same way with baptism. If we read the Bible in the proper historical meaning of the times, we see that people believed that water could carry a spiritual reality like forgiveness of sins and the presence of the Holy Spirit.
OBJECTOR: I don't know if you are right in how you see ancient times. But assuming that you have understood them correctly, it is still possible that those ancient people were wrong in their views and that we are now in a better position to know the true meaning of baptism.
CATHOLIC: I suppose that's theoretically possible, but in the case of baptism I don't think that we know better than the ancients. There seems to be unanimous agreement among the Church Fathers on this matter. They all believed that baptism was more than a symbol. They said that it brought about the forgiveness of sin as implied in Ananias's statement to Paul. Further, they often quoted Titus 3:5 in connection with baptism, "He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit."
OBJECTOR: But that verse shows my point. It is the "renewal in the Holy Spirit" that saves us, not baptism.
CATHOLIC: Agreed. The Holy Spirit renews our hearts. But notice how Paul connects that renewal with the washing of regeneration. Why would he talk about "washing" unless he was referring to the only washing that Christians were familiar with, that is, baptism? That's how the Church Fathers viewed it. For example, Proclus, one of the Eastern Fathers said, "God bestows salvation through baptism, offering baptism as a common grace for all." This is echoed by Hippolytus who said, "If we become divine after rebirth in baptism through water and the Holy Spirit, we shall also be co-heirs with Christ after the resurrection of the dead." It was the common faith of all Christians that baptism is a life-giving sacrament.
OBJECTOR: Even if all ancient Christians believed the way you say, that still doesn't mean that we should believe the same way they did.
CATHOLIC: For Catholics it does. We believe that a unanimous teaching among the Church Fathers carries a binding force for the Church today. For us it is a matter of corporate humility and a willingness to listen to the Church of Christ throughout the ages. But even if you don't agree with that methodological rule, I still think that your symbolist understanding of baptism fails to explain why Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River.
OBJECTOR: Jesus was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness," as he says to John the Baptist in Matthew 3:15. Now, clearly, Jesus did not have to be forgiven of any sin (cf. Heb. 4:15). So in what sense was he fulfilling all righteousness? He was giving us an example to follow.
CATHOLIC: Yes, Jesus certainly did not need to be forgiven. And he no doubt wanted us to follow his example. But here again I think you are reading the biblical text in a reduced fashion.
OBJECTOR: Then what do you think Jesus's baptism meant?
CATHOLIC: Jesus was baptized to make all the waters in the world holy and usable for baptism. His presence in the Jordan sanctified the natural element of water so that it could carry the forgiveness that only his person can convey. This view is also common among the Church Fathers as expressed by Maximus the Confessor: "When the Savior washed, all water for our baptism is made clean, purified at its source for the dispensing of baptismal grace to the people of future ages. Christ is the first to be baptized, then so that Christians will follow after him with confidence."

Marian Devotion of the Month

Our Lady of Guadalupe

So from far and wide the natives came to see the miraculous Image. And Juan Diego became a preacher. He was one of their own, one they could trust, and, with his characteristic intensity, he told his people about the Virgin and about her Son who died for them. He did not have to traverse mountains and valleys to reach the unreachable as the good friars did; no, he just stood at his post and souls came to him, I should say they came to see their Mother, the most pure Lady. Like Caesar, they came, they saw; but unlike Caesar, they were conquered. Our Lady of Guadalupe and Juan Diego conquered them. In fact, there was hardly a native who approached the priests for Baptism in those early years who had not first been evangelized by the custodian at the shrine.

By 1541, just ten years after the apparitions, there were ten million Indians who had been converted from paganism. Today, Juan Diego's tilma is Mexico's most popular religious symbol. Unlike any painting, it shows no sketching, or any sign of outline drawn to permit an artist to produce it. The very method to produce it is still not known. It can be seen today in a large basilica built to house up to 10,000 people.

Every artist who has examined the tilma has affirmed that there simply is no way short of a miracle for such an exquisite picture to have been painted on such a coarse and porous surface. Furthermore, the tilma itself, made from cactus fibers, should have fallen apart, naturally speaking, twenty or thirty years at most after it was made. Nevertheless, long defying the laws of decomposition, it hangs together to this very day. Needless to say, if the canvas has been miraculously preserved, so has the image. The colors are still as fresh and vivid as when they first appeared, despite the natural corroding effect of black smoke, which for a century arose before it from hundreds of burning vigil lights (it wasn't until 1647 that the precious relic was put under glass), and despite the accidental spilling of a bottle of nitric acid across its surface by a workman in 1791.

Saunders, Rev. William. "Saint Juan Diego and Our Lady." *Arlington Catholic Herald*. *https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/saint-juan-diego-and-our-lady.htmlSubmitted by the Religious Education Department*

Continued next week.

Sacred Music

Notes From The Choir

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Introit

"Skies, let the Just One come forth like the dew, let him descend from the clouds like the rain. The earth will open up and give birth to our Savior."
Is 45: 8

Upcoming this week:

LITURGIES

CHRISTMAS EVE

- **Monday, December 24:**
  - 4 p.m. Mass - Children's Choir & Adult Choir
  - 4:15 p.m. Mass(gym) - Cantor
  - 5:30 p.m. Mass - Cantor
  - Midnight Mass - Chamber, St. Cecilia Schola & Orchestra

CHRISTMAS DAY

- **Tuesday, December 25:**
  - 8 a.m. Mass - Cantor
  - 9:30 a.m. Mass - Cantor
  - 11 a.m. Mass - Adult Choir
  - 12:30 p.m. Mass - Cantor

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

- **Saturday, December 29:**
  - 5 p.m. Mass - Cantor
- **Sunday, December 30:**
  - 8 a.m. Mass - Cantor
  - 9:30 a.m. Mass - Cantor
  - 11 a.m. Mass - Cantor
  - 6 p.m. Mass - Cantor

REHEARSALS...

All Choirs on Christmas Break!

Adult Faith

ALL MEN ARE WELCOME

There is more to life.

January 26 & 27, 2019
Men's Weekend

Recharge your spiritual battery, meet other guys in the parish, listen to inspiring testimonies, enjoy great meals, and time for prayer and reflection.

This FREE two day renewal weekend runs from 8:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. on Saturday and resumes on Sunday from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Register by January 11th as space is limited.
Registration forms are available in the narthex and parish office.

Matthew Kelly's newest book, *the Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity,* will be available while supplies last after all Masses on Christmas Eve & Christmas Day. Thank you to a generous family for providing these books for our parishioners!

L'Alto Young Adult Network Adoration & Confession

Thursday, January 10th

7:00 p.m. Adoration, reflection, confessions, music and quiet prayer time.

8:00 p.m. Fellowship at a local establishment.

JOIN OTHER YOUNG FAMILIES AT

STAY AND PLAY

Sunday, January 6th after 9:30 Mass.
Church Hall
Coffee, snacks, and children's activities provided.

Holy Spirit Prayer Gathering

Thursday, January 11th
7:00 p.m. in the chapel

We need the Holy Spirit's guidance, inspiration, hope and peace.
At this prayer gathering we will invite the Holy Spirit into our lives. Join us for live music, Adoration and prayer. Ask for healing, peace, discernment, or whatever you need.

Saint Mary
MEN'S MINISTRY

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!!!!!

"We imagine that the shepherds were thoroughly changed by that magical meeting with the infant Jesus on that star lit night. They had seen the night sky filled with the radiant luminosity of God's glory and heard Angels announcing the birth of the Savior. Christmas is about Light coming into the darkness of our lives, about our return from exile, about inner peace. It is about the birth of Jesus Christ within us. If we identify with the shepherds, we will seek and dream of a different kingdom; one under the Lordship of God, revealed to us as Jesus Christ on that starry night so many years ago. We are meant to be changed by Advent and Christmas. That is the sacramental purpose of this season of the Christian liturgical year.

From "The First Christmas" by Borg and Crossan

Our next event is on Saturday, January 19, 2019 (8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.) featuring Deacon John Freund on "How the Holy Spirit works in our lives"
RSVP to Melissa Novak at mnovak@stmarymokena.org or 708-326-9313

WHY IS SUNDAY MASS IMPORTANT?

"It would be easier for the world to survive without the sun, than to do without the Holy Mass." -St. Padre Pio

Common "Good Excuses"

I don't need to go to Mass to get closer to God. At Mass you receive God himself-Jesus Christ truly present in the sacrament. Even a beautiful mountain vista can't compare to that.

I don't have time. There are 24 hours in a day, 168 hours in a week. Mass takes one hour . That's less than 1% of your week. You have the time; find it.

I had a bad experience with the church. This is always sad. But many of us also had bad teachers-and we know the whole education system isn't bad. Jesus wants to bring you healing at Mass.

Ideas borrowed from NCregister.com

1. It's your way to relive the Last Supper.
2. When was the last time you prayed too much?
3. If you want to spend eternity with Christ, you need to get to know him now.
4. Wise people invest money for the future. How much more should we invest in eternal life?
5. It has to be better for you than T.V.
6. If you knew Jesus would be somewhere, wouldn't you go see him?
7. Statistics say that people who go to church are less stressed.
8. It's the best way to pray with your family and friends-and to cope in troubled times.
9. Life is complicated. Get directions that *work*-from the One who created life.
10. The third Commandments ask us to go to Mass every Sunday.
11. Is one hour too much to give God? How much time do you spend on other priorities?

Religious Education

For the Marian Year, Religious Education received Our Lady of Guadalupe for the month of December. Father Javier del Castillo, who is originally from Mexico and a priest of Opus Dei, came to celebrate the 11:00 a.m. Mass and give a talk on Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 9. We also had a wonderful Mexican lunch! Thank you to all those who joined us and to those who volunteered!

Youth Ministry

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

IGNITE Youth Ministry will be offering

Epiphany Home Blessing Kits

after all Masses on

December 29 & 30

This is an ancient custom among Christians, celebrated on the Epiphany, January 6th, recalling the visit of the Magi. The Wise Men were drawn to seek Jesus through the miraculous Grace of God. The visit was a great blessing for them. In memory of this visit, we now invite Jesus to visit our homes in a special way, just as the Magi visited the Holy Family.

The kit includes chalk, a candle, incense, holy water, a gold coin, and instructions with the prayer of blessing.
The suggested donation is $2.

Thank you for supporting Youth Ministry!

MARCH FOR LIFE CHICAGO

UNIQUE FROM DAY ONE

March For Life Chicago
January 13, 2019
2:00 - 4:00pm

Location: Federal Plaza - 50 W. Adams - Chicago

INVITE INSPIRE IGNITE
Lighting the way to Jesus Christ

For more information about Youth Ministry, contact Craig Mazur at
teens@stmarymokena.org
or 708-326-9356

Angels...

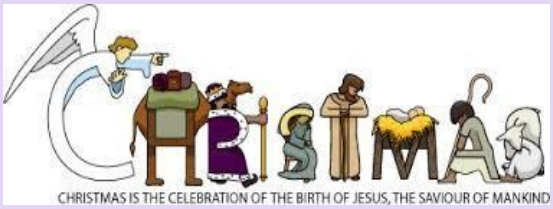
a. are whiskerless youths.
b. are plump babies with wings.
c. don't have to be believed in.
d. are referred to, but not explicitly, in the Nicene Creed.
e. None of the above.

Come to Youth Ministry this Sunday, 12/23, to find out the correct answer!

Merry Christmas from Youth Ministry!

School News

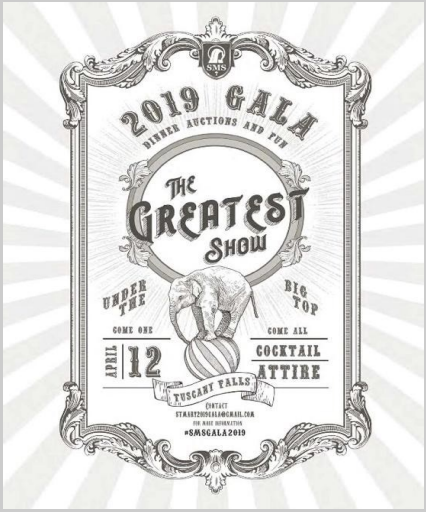
Classes will resume on Monday, January 7. The school office will also be closed during this Christmas break.



Open House & New Family Registration

All are invited to St. Mary School Open House on Sunday, January 27, 2019 Join us for 11:00 a.m. Mass in church. Afterwards please come over to see all that our school has to offer, as we would like to welcome you into our school family for the 2019– 2020 school year. As you see your relatives over these holidays, please extend our invitation. New Family registration will begin at this Open House. For more information please call the school office at 708-326-9330.

ST. MARY
TITANS
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH
SPIRITUAL & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
We invite you to experience the vibrant, warm and welcoming environment at St. Mary Catholic School.
See why students succeed. Feel our sense of community. Meet faculty, teachers, families,
and students in Preschool through 8th grade.
Come see the difference.
Open House
SUNDAY, JANUARY 27 | 12 - 2 p.m.
+ Tours + Information + Refreshments
www.stmaryschoolmokena.org
11409 195th Street, Mokena



SAVE THE DATE!

All are invited to attend the St. Mary School 2019 Gala,

The Greatest Show Under The Big Top,

on Friday, April 12, 2019.

Christian Service

Pro-life Corner

"AS THE FATHER LOVES, SO DO HIS CHILDREN. JUST AS HE IS MERCIFUL, SO WE ARE CALLED TO BE MERCIFUL TO EACH OTHER."
— Pope Francis
Bridges of Mercy for Post-Abortion Healing:

Our **Bereavement Support Group** offers the opportunity to join with others on the same journey that meets regularly throughout the year. If you have lost a loved one and feel that a support group would be beneficial, come to our next meeting Thursday, January 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the Bishop's Room. Enter by door #5 just north of the school main entrance.

Thanks from "Giving Tree" recipients:

"Dear St. Mary Parishioners, I wanted to take the time to say thank you very much for your donation of gifts. We are very grateful for what you do. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are very much appreciated by my entire family. May your holidays sparkle with moments of love, laughter , and goodwill and may the year ahead be full of happiness and joy."

"Our Family wants to thank you, St. Mary Parishioners, for the wonderful gifts our children received for Christmas."

"Thank you and God bless you!"

"Thank you for your gift. We appreciate the thought and time taken for this. May you have a wonderful Christmas and best wishes for the coming year."

Thank you very much for the wonderful Christmas gifts. They are greatly appreciated. Blessings to you."

Merry Christmas

Community Life

The Council of Catholic Women Officer's Meeting will be Wednesday, January 9 at 9:00 a.m. in the church hall.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The next council meeting will be Tuesday, January 8th at 7:00 p.m. in the church hall.

Did you join our parish in 2018?
Save the date!
Saturday, February 2, 2019 after 5pm Mass
~Annual New Parishioner Pizza Party~

We would like to meet you and welcome you to St. Mary Parish!

Join us for pizza, beverages & good company
~Our treat~

Look for RSVP info in the January bulletins.

The Combined St. Christopher/St. Emeric Music Ministry's annual Christmas Concert
Thursday, December 27th at 7:00 p.m.
St. Christopher Church, 147th & Keeler, Midlothian, IL

Join in this musical celebration
"Stille Nacht/Silent Night"

Performance by the combined adult choirs of St. Christopher & St. Emeric, the St. Chris Children's Choir, Living Stones Choir accompanied by the St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Phil & Amy Switalski.

Refreshments will be served following the concert, free-will offering appreciated.

Stop by the Narthex fellowship area after the concert and pick up St. Christopher Tours upcoming 2019/2020 trip information on various theatre outings, Phil & Amy performances, Cape Cod, Mackinac Island, The Grand Canyon and more. For information call 708-687-3302.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you or a loved one are in need of a prayer shawl, you may contact the parish office at (708) 326-9305. These shawls wrap the recipient as a reminder of God's love and the prayers that are being offered on their behalf. This group meets the 1st Monday of the month in the church hall at 9:00 a.m. (unless it is a holiday).

CHURCH NAME & NUMBER—
St. Mary #512114

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19515 S. 115th Avenue, P.O. Box 2
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PHONE—
708-326-9303 / communitylife@stmarymokena.org

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